

AXEMAN REPORT

AUGUST 2006



FROM THE CDR/1SG

Dear Family & Friends of Alpha Company
1-121st FA BN,

It is with saddened hearts that we bid you greetings from Kuwait. Let me begin with noting that our most heart felt condolences go out to the family and friends of SPC Castner (Company C, 1-121st FA BN) and SGT Jopek (Company A, 2-127th INF BN). These were two outstanding soldiers who will be in our thoughts and prayers for throughout our time here. May the Lord grant you peace and tranquility through this trying period.

I'd like to address the issue that has risen from recent events with regards to your soldiers' ability to accomplish their mission at hand. It is my opinion that your soldiers have been trained to the standard to accomplish the mission that has been tasked of them. I have heard many statements to the effect that "there should have been more of this training and less of that training", and so on and so on. Like any good debated topic, both sides can be argued to stalemates. The bottom line is, the training this unit received was to the standard and has prepared them to take on and succeed in performing their mission.

It must be understood that we are in a war zone; a war zone that is filled with a myriad of hazards. We conduct our missions in a delicate posture between offense and defense; ready to engage the cowardly enemy we face while defending the very rights we most solemnly cherish; life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for the Iraqi people. Your soldiers are

performing their missions with the best equipment and technology currently available and are performing their missions extremely well. In this short time, they are learning quickly the techniques to succeed in the region. Training isn't just something that occurs back at home station armories or what we receive at a Mobilization Station. Training is continuous and must be continuous in order to be successful in the execution of our mission. With every mission, we are training; before, during, and after. That is what is making your soldiers successful.

Your soldiers are actively busy performing their missions throughout our region. They have done an outstanding job thus far and continue to perform to the highest standards. Some have reported to have met with some of the soldiers from SECFOR I from Maine. MSG Holmes met briefly with SGT Canales and SSG Chaison up at CSC Cedar. I've been in contact with CPT Lyon and intend to make a run up his way in the near future on one of our missions. I will definitely get some pictures and have them posted to the Family Support Site.

The facilities here in our camp are really quite nice. Everything is air conditioned from the tents, company buildings, MWR facility, Exercise Gym, Post Exchange (PX), Dining Facility, and Post Chapel. This definitely helps to counter the 130+ degree days we've experienced since arriving (yes, that's "In the Shade!!!"). Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!!!



AXEMAN REPORT

AUGUST 2006



We also have some fast food options, Subway and Pizza Inn, if the soldiers want a change of pace from the four serving times offered by the Dining Facility (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and Midnight). And finally, there's a "Green Bean Coffee", a 24/7 Coffee Shop similar to Starbucks.



On a lighter side, Alpha Company is looking forward to the future sporting events as there should be much debate and then bragging rights for the victors. Of course, all eyes are on November 19th, when the Patriots take on the Packers at Lambeau Field. It is still a ways off, but we'll be watching the progress of both teams as we anticipate the "Showdown".



In addition, the "Mainiacs" are looking to redeem the loss in last year's NCAA Frozen Four College Hockey to the Wisconsin Badgers. It'll be a while until spring gets here, but we're sure to leave some evidence that the Black Bears will be on the hunt!!!



1SG Eubank and I would like to congratulate the following soldiers on the well deserved promotions to the rank indicated:

MSG Stephen Channell, SSG Richard Jerrell, SSG Jason Liss, SGT Ronald Batula, CPL James Barnard, CPL Ralph Bartman,

CPL Jeremy Cote, CPL Donald Rafford, CPL Allen Rood, SPC Jonathan Barnes, SPC Randolph Chupp, SPC Arthur Churchill, SPC Saintil Doree, SPC Jeffery Gardiner, SPC Hugh Goodfellow, SPC Patrick Hennesy, SPC John Holland, SPC Craig Light, SPC Wade Light, SPC Raymond McCrary, SPC Jacob Melendrez, SPC Kyle Millett, SPC Dustin Pelletier, SPC Aaron Priest, PFC Timothy Adams, PFC Ronald Easton, PFC James Larosa, and PV2 Glenn Cole.

In addition, we would like to thank the following soldiers for their continued dedication to duty and service by announcing their Re-enlistments and/or Extension of Enlistments:

SGT Richard Aveau, SGT Andrew Bugbee, SGT Scott Sjoborg, CPL Ralph Bartman, SPC Joey Billings, and SPC Jeremiah Cuevas.

To all our family and friends, we say thanks. Keep the letters and packages coming. Words cannot express how much these mean to us. And a special thanks to the Freeport Flag Ladies for the photographs {can be see at www.FreeportFlagLadies.com , July link} and box of goodies for the soldiers. We truly appreciate the support.

Until we chat again.

v/r

CPT Kent A. Cousins
Commander
Company A, 1-121st FA BN (SECFOR)
"AXEMAN 6"

AXEMAN REPORT

HQS PLATOON

Hello from the Headquarters Platoon of the Axemen of Northern Kuwait!

As of today, 19 August 2006, we've been in-country for one month – 11 months to go. Time really has passed faster than expected and, hopefully, the next 11 months will pass just as quickly.

It would be nice to say that we swarmed ashore like Vikings, but the truth of the matter is, modern Soldiers that we are, we flew in relative comfort to land outside of Kuwait City last month. And after a few days at a major troop reception camp we traveled by bus up to Convoy Security Center (CSC) Navistar, our home for the next year.

We're made up of Soldiers from the cities and seacoasts of Maine, the cities and deserts of Arizona and Nevada, and we even have a token Soldier from somewhere in the forests of Wisconsin. A hundred different towns and cities and dozens of military units have contributed to the "standing up" of Alpha Company by giving fathers, sons, and brothers; married, divorced or single; corrections officers; tribal police; education computer consultant, loggers, vending machine coordinator, college students, retail clerks, and data entry clerks. Youngsters, older men, and even older, older men, all of us were thrown together by the currents of war for one purpose. To come back home to you, our loved ones.

Fulfilling our convoy escort security mission is important, but to come back home to all of you - any of us would argue that that is the one purpose that carries us through each day. And each day is busy. HMMWVs, gun trucks, have to be kept in good working order. There are long hours spent analyzing mission orders, trading advice and lessons learned with peers, briefing subordinates, cleaning weapons and double checking body armor. And at the end of

AUGUST 2006



the day, whether that means sunset, midnight or dawn, there are quiet moments to reflect on whether everything has been covered and everything ready for the next mission.

Even then, whether a gun truck driver, gunner, or truck commander; clerk, mechanic, medic or communications specialist, you are never far from our thoughts. If you could look inside our hot, crowded, and overpacked HMMWVs, guaranteed you'll see a photograph of wife, family, parents, or girlfriend, in there somewhere. The fact is that you'll never be far from our thoughts, especially during birthdays and anniversaries; Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, Valentine's Day, and even St. Patrick's Day.

Make no mistake about it – our mission can be dangerous, but knowing that we have your support, and that all of you are waiting for us to come home, means more to us than you will ever know.

Thank you.

We'll see you soon.

Headquarters Platoon of the Axemen of Northern Kuwait

1ST PLATOON

Greetings from the 1st Platoon,

If the Soldiers from 1st Platoon never agreed on anything, although we do for the most part, it would be that Kuwait is **HOT**. As a matter of fact, on my way from the Dining Facility to the tent to write this, I stopped by the wet bulb to observe the current temp here at Navistar. In case you were wondering the wet bulb is, it is the thermometer the Navistar medics use to determine what heat category flag they

AXEMAN REPORT

AUGUST 2006



should fly. The flags are: **GREEN** for - the sun is down so its only in the nineties; **YELLOW** for - stand by for heat!, **RED** - for - lets cook some eggs on the hood of a HMMWV; and **BLACK** for - lets roast a turkey inside a HMMWV. It's a good thing they have A/C for us in those things. The temperature at the wet bulb station is a toasty 145 and yes, the **BLACK** flag is flying. Quite a change for a bunch of Maine boys. It is truly amazing how well we have all adapted to this kind of extreme environment.

As far as what we have been up to, we have been very busy doing convoy security missions throughout our area of operations.

Even when we are not out on missions, there is always plenty to do. Just this past week, SGT Ruhlin, the second squad, Squad Leader, and SFC Martin, 1st Platoon Sergeant, braved the before-noon heat, **YELLOW** to **RED** flag, and built some great shelving in our platoon storage trailer. The storage area is where we store some of our equipment in between missions. Although they didn't finish, the guys from third squad went out and got the rest of it pretty much done. The shelves are great. This bunch of guys can't have enough organizing aids. =)

This editions' **PICTURE PERFECT HIGHLIGHT** is of SPC Donald Brinkman of Lincoln.



AUGUST 2006

In this picture he is looking over his radios sitting in his TCs (Truck Commander) seat. Looking pretty sharp there, Ducky.

Until the next installment God bless all the families and friends at home. Sometimes it seems to this Soldier that your sacrifices are much greater than ours.

CW2 David Cheney
1st Platoon Leader

2ND PLATOON



SOLDIERS FROM 2ND PLATOON:

Front: SPC D. Saucier, SPC J. Cuevas, SPC N. Williams, SPC W. Greeley, PFC H. Russell; Middle: SFC B. Roscoe, SSG M. Hall, SFT J. Pelotte, CPL R. Bartman, PFC J. Holland, SPC W. Walker, SPC J. Cote, SGT R. Aveau, SPC J. Worcester, 1LT H.M. Gary; Rear: SGT P. Woodman, SGT K. Lushy, SGT S. Sjoberg, PFC K. Millett, SGT G. Marquis, SPC M. Harrington, SGT C. McBean, SPC N. Coughlin.

Hello to all family and friends of 2nd Platoon. We pray that you all are doing well in our absence. Things are very busy these days in the continued validation process in theater. Things ranging from Gun Truck Crew certification, Crew Served Weapons qualification to numerous mandatory briefings on current operations in theater. We are being issued new equipment and vehicles are being modified for soldiers safety on almost a daily basis.

The Maine boys, with our new found Brothers from Nevada and Arizona {WILD

AXEMAN REPORT

AUGUST 2006



HORSE}, have come together seamlessly and we together get things done looking like it comes easy.

Things here are no different from Camp Shelby, so the soldiers know what to expect from day-to-day with the unit. They are doing a super job as usual setting the standard again for all to follow.

The unit replaced had a great knowledge of this mission (they logged over 5 Million Miles!!). Our crews were required to spend 10 mission days in Iraq doing convoy escort with the best of their best. As of the middle of the month, we have taken over the complete mission.

In all this work being done, we hang on to the thoughts of coming home and spending precious moments with you. With that, our thoughts and prayers are with you. We ask that as we take care of each other, you do the same back home. Be patient and kind to each other and we'll see you as we are given leave.

Take care and God Bless.

SFC Roscoe
2nd Platoon Sergeant

3RD PLATOON

AXEMAN 30 BAGHDAD BLOG

ALLONS!!! On or about mid-July 2006, the rest of the main effort of 1/121 FA BN Alpha Company arrived in Kuwait. The daytime temperatures have been around the 120's so hydration and fatigue in the extreme heat has challenged these soldiers. Fortunately, they are up to the task, and have

been prepared to meet all the challenges that lie ahead for the platoon. The men had a few days to get acclimated to the new environment and complete the necessary training before the movement north to the Forward Operating Base located by the border of Iraq.



2LT Ferrer and MSG Kinsey

After a long month, 3rd Platoon has finally completed the Relief in Place, Transfer of Authority (RIP TOA) with a smooth transition from the outgoing unit. Within the past month, the platoon has accomplished over 30 missions and has logged over 100,000 miles. These soldiers have been highly motivated and truly dedicated in accomplishing the mission in which they only have enough time to rest and do maintenance on their vehicles and equipment.

The warriors of 3rd platoon have clearly demonstrated what the warrior ethos is all about. Know that these men are working hard to contribute to the overall mission success. Their resolve, dedication, hard efforts, and endurance to complete all missions above Army standards is what separates our United States Army from all

AXEMAN REPORT

AUGUST 2006



others, and ensures the freedom we all enjoy. Never Broken!!!

2LT Ferrer
3rd Platoon Leader



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
1st Squadron, 221st Cavalry
6400 N. Range Road
Las Vegas, Nevada 89009



4TH PLATOON



4th Platoon Soldiers from Left to Right:
SPC Craig, SSG Gahm, SPC Randall, SPC Moomey, SPC
Malcom

we respond appropriately and well guarded. Our well-being is good, no doubt this task has been secured by our families responding with good prayers. 4th Platoon Soldiers are satisfied that we have been provided with the assets, tools and knowledge necessary to successfully accomplish this mission.

The Blackhorse is our rampart and stands before those who resist us, while giving strength to our knowledge of tradition and to the memory of the unit to which we truly belong. We are the 221 CAV, and the espree de corps of 4th Platoon proves with every opportunity that “NEVER BROKEN” is more than a motto and is instead a command from our higher.

1LT Garcia
4th Platoon Leader

Our first month here at Camp Navistar is over, and with the experience of Camp Shelby behind us, the spirit of the cavalry lives on in 4th Platoon, Alpha Company, 1-121 FA. Each and every Soldier is performing admirably and they have committed themselves to doing the job they all volunteered to come here to do. Our task is simple enough. Provide security for dozens of tractor trailer trucks hauling commodities north.

On occasion we encounter an IED or some other insurgent activity, and our training and sense of safety has ensured that

AXEMAN REPORT

AXEMAN SPOTLIGHT SOLDIER



SSG JASON LISS

Staff Sergeant Jason Liss, born in 1982 to David and JoAnn Liss, hails from Plover, Wisconsin. He enlisted in the Army National Guard on 2 January 2001 as a 92G, Cook (Spoon). He deployed to Kuwait in 2005 with A/2-127 INF BN, Wisconsin ARNG, and decided to remain when the battalion prepared to return home for demobilization. As the newly promoted SSG Liss, who also found a new career in the Tactical Operations Center, said, “I enjoy my job and the duty I’m performing. And, I really don’t want to quit until I feel my job is complete.”

CLOSING SHOTS

On 22 August 2006, Alpha Company had our official “State Flag Raising Ceremony”. Below

AUGUST 2006

is the text of the speech, prepared by SSG Stanley Hampton:



“Today’s flag raising ceremony marks another milestone in the short combat history of the Axemen of Alpha Company 1st Battalion 121st Field Artillery, Wisconsin Army National Guard.”



“The flags of the States of Maine, Nevada and Arizona, each of which provided Soldiers for this deployment, each contain their own history.

And each flag contains an element appropriate to us, officers, NCOs and Soldiers, from these great states.”

AXEMAN REPORT

AUGUST 2006



Guard combat arms unit provided over 100 Soldiers for this mission."



ISG Eubank, SGT Aveau, & CPL Billings

"The Maine State Flag includes, above the Maine state motto, the word "DIRIGO", which means "I lead." This is appropriate, for our company senior leadership, the Commander, the Executive Officer, and the First Sergeant, all hail from the State of Maine. Like their predecessors during the Revolutionary War, when Maine was not a state but was part of Massachusetts and fought under the Massachusetts flag, our leadership lead us through this deployment as part of another State Guard battalion."



SPC Randall & SPC Craig

"The Arizona State Flag began its history before Arizona became a state. In the 1910 National Rifle Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio, the Arizona Rifle Team did not carry a flag or emblem, because they did not have one. This was corrected by a future Arizona United States Senator, and his final design provided the basis for the state flag. This is appropriate, because during convoy escort missions, marksmanship is critical to Soldier survival and defeating the enemy."

"We raise these flags today not to claim territory, but to announce our presence, our pride, and our determination to our comrades in arms, and to our enemies. Thank you."



SFC Deutch & 2LT Ferrer

"The Nevada State Flag contains the phrase 'BATTLEBORN', due to Nevada being admitted to the union during the Civil War. For the Soldiers from the State of Nevada, this is appropriate, for Nevada's only Army National

